



News From The Retirement Symposium: Should Clients Move When They Retire?

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An advisor can help clients figure out whether retiring to a new place makes sense by reviewing much more than the financial implications of the move, advisor **Linda Lubitz Boone** told attendees at the 6th Annual Financial Advisor Retirement Symposium.

The conference, which ended today at the Venetian in Las Vegas, was sponsored by *Financial Advisor* and *Private Wealth* magazines and attracted more than 600 attendees.

Lubitz Boone, founder and president of The Lubitz Financial Group in Miami, Fla., reviewed a long list of criteria that advisors can discuss with clients to help them decide whether to move to a new city in the United States, to move overseas or to stay in their current home.

From the start, she dispelled the myth that most people want to move when they retire. Based on an AARP survey and other studies she reviewed, **Lubitz Boone** said, more than 90 percent of people want to stay in their current home.

"Only about 3 to 4 percent actually move, and they don't move very far," she said. Of the people who do move, 60 percent move less than 20 miles away from their current home and only 20 percent move more than 200 miles away, she added.

For clients who do want to move, she recommended that advisors avoid "Top Places To Retire" lists. "The bottom line: You don't want to go to the 'best' list because there's no consistency and they all use different criteria," she said. Two resources for information on places to retire that she did recommend are the Milken Institute's [Center For The Future Of Aging](#) and the [Center for Retirement Research](#) at Boston University.

Lubitz Boone said one of the most important things to consider if clients are going to move to a new city is whether it embraces an older population and offers them specific recreational and educational activities and other ways to be involved in the community.

Great options for seniors to take affordable or free classes aimed at their interests are Osher Lifelong Learning Centers, which are [on the campuses of more than 100 U.S. colleges](#), she said.

Other criteria she suggested to help clients evaluate whether and where to move include:

- Do they want to be near friends or family? Do they want to move but can't because they need to care for aging parents? If they are moving to be near teenage grandchildren, will they be disappointed when the children are off at college in a few years? If the grandchildren are toddlers, are they willing to be steady babysitters if their own children ask? "If they are going to be moving to the grandkids, it's important for them to have a frank, honest discussion with the kids about what the grandparents' role will be," she said.
- What are the state and local property taxes in the place they might move?
- Do clients want a job there? **Lubitz Boone** recommends that retirees research small business growth, poverty levels and employment for people over 65 in places they might want to live.
- What are the costs of health care and in-home services? Does the area have geriatric physicians and a wide range of health professionals and facilities?
- How much recreation does an area offer and is there transportation to reach activities?
- Do politics matter to the client? **Lubitz Boone** mentioned a 75-year-old client who is a very active organizer in the Democratic party who moved from south Florida to north Florida. "She didn't do the research. Where she moved to is Tea Party heaven. She's very unhappy," **Lubitz Boone** said.
- How many grocery stores are close by? Easy access to food can be a big plus, she said.

Retiring Overseas

Lubitz Boone said many people dream of moving to a tropical climate, but they need to ask themselves whether they like the change of seasons. "If you do, retiring to Costa Rica probably shouldn't be on the top of your list because it's about 75 all the time," she noted.

Also, if a client gets annoyed by slow Internet connections, moving to a place with a poor Internet system may not be ideal, she said. Electricity can be more unreliable in many other countries, so checking out the frequency of outages would be a good idea, not only for tech savvy individuals but also for those afraid of the dark, she said.

One question most clients might not have considered is "Do you want to live on a dirt road?" **Lubitz Boone** said a lot of gated communities in Latin America have paved roads in the community, but residents have to drive on dirt roads to get to the entrance.

Some clients also have routines, like watching NFL games every Sunday afternoon that probably won't be on local cable channels overseas. Would they be unhappy if they can't see the games?

Tax structures also need to be investigated and can be very different in other countries. Some places might have lower taxes, but in others pensions might be taxed at higher rates, she said.

Some of the "best" places to retire overseas? Panama, Costa Rica, Uruguay, Thailand and Malaysia, she says, because of their affordability or other benefits.

Staying Put

The third option for clients is what the majority want: to stay at home. That may work the best for most people,

but being familiar with senior resources in your own home town can make life easier. One organization **Lubitz** **Boone** recommended is ageinplace.org, which has chapters nationwide and offers resources to help people stay in their homes. Another help, she said, is an [aging-in-place remodeling checklist](#) from the National Association of Homebuilders.
